Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A DMARD sparing method for treating a chronic inflammatory disease or condition in a human patient in need thereof, comprising administering to the patient a therapeutically effective amount of a DMARD in accordance with a DMARD dosage regimen for a period of time, and thereafter:

~~(A)~~ co-administering to the patient a therapeutically effective amount of a DMARD and a cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitor in accordance with a combination dosage regimen, ~~or~~

~~(B) administering to the patient a therapeutically effective amount of a cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitor in accordance with a COX-2 dosage regimen,~~

whereby the total exposure to the DMARD is reduced.

2. (Original) The method according to Claim 1 wherein the DMARD is selected from the group consisting of: methotrexate, infliximab, etanercept, leflunomide, sulfasalazine, azathioprine, cyclosporine, hydroxychloroquine and pencillamine.

3. (Original) The method according to Claim 1 wherein the cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitor is selected from the group consisting of: rofecoxib, etoricoxib, celecoxib, valdecoxib, parecoxib, lumiracoxib, BMS347070, tiracoxib, ABT963, CS502 and GW406381.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim [[4]] 1 wherein the DMARD is methotrexate.

6. (Original) The method according to Claim 5 wherein the DMARD dosing regimen is 7.5 to 22.5 mg once weekly.

7. (Original) The method according to Claim 6 wherein the period of time in accordance with the DMARD dosage regimen is 8 weeks.

8. (Original) The method according to Claim 7 wherein the cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitor is rofecoxib.

9. (Original) The method according to Claim 8 wherein the combination dosage regimen comprises: administering rofecoxib at a dose of 12.5 or 25 mg on a once daily basis and reducing the amount of methotrexate by 2.5 mg per week relative to the DMARD dosing regimen.

10. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 4 wherein the DMARD is etanercept.

11. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 10 wherein the DMARD dosing regimen is 25 mg twice weekly.

12. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 11 wherein the cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitor is rofecoxib.

13. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 12 wherein the combination dosage regimen comprises: administering rofecoxib at a dose of 12.5 or 25 mg on a once daily basis and administering etanercept at a dose of 25 mg on a once weekly basis.

14. (Currently amended) The method according to Claim [[4]] 1 further comprising: eliminating administering the DMARD to the patient and continuing therapy with the cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitor alone.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 15 wherein the DMARD is etanercept.

17. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 16 wherein the DMARD dosing regimen is 25 mg twice weekly.

18. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 17 wherein the cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitor is rofecoxib.

19. (Withdrawn) The method according to Claim 18 wherein rofecoxib is administered at a dose of 12.5 or 25 mg on a once daily basis.

20. (Original) The method according to Claim 1, further comprising co-administering a cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitor to the patient being administered the DMARD in accordance with the DMARD dosage regimen, wherein the cyclooxygenase-2 selective inhibitor is administered at a dose which, in combination with the DMARD in accordance with a DMARD dosage regimen, is effective to treat the chronic inflammatory disease or condition.